

PRISONERS

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



Prisoners is a highly suspenseful and extremely intense story about how you cannot always prepare for everything. Hugh Jackman is piercing as a survivalist father who literally takes matters into his own hands in retaliation for his daughter's kidnapping. From the very first frame until the very last, there is a sense of foreboding.

Prisoners also weaves themes of innocence lost, of faith and forgiveness, of vengeance and of redemption into a psychological thriller that will disturb your peace of mind. Jake Gyllenhaal is a ticking clock as the police detective whose persistence and determination are in direct cosmic alignment with Jackman's frantic father. Desperation leads to painful choices and karma is never far away in this small town drama. To tell you more of the plot would spoil it for you.

What might any of us be willing or capable of given the right circumstances and how far would we go to find our child? When would we give up hope? Would we? What is the difference between the hunter and the hunted? What makes us victims? What keeps us prisoners? Well, based on this movie, some of the answers are hate, apathy and weakness.

Prisoners also gives us a peek into how good people can do bad things. How we judge the actions of others comes in direct proportion to how we judge ourselves. Penance for our wrongs can come in many forms. In the end, we are the orchestrators of our fates—even children have choices when faced with life changing decisions. The child who runs away from the stranger will have a very different fate than the one who goes along for the ride.

The illusion of safety in the world is shattered every day. Terrorism, crime and brutality are as much a part of existence as they have ever been. It is up to us to decide moment by moment if we are to remain prisoners of our own delusional patterns of thinking or if we can finally see the truth as it really is, no matter how horrible it might be. It is only when we can fully take responsibility for our actions that true freedom can exist. Not freedom of the body, but freedom of the mind.

Prisoners is a thought-provoking movie that will lead you to question how you relate to good and evil in the world. Be prepared to be held captive. I give *Prisoners* four cells.

